

VZCZCXRO5963
RR RUEHCHI RUEHCN RUEHDT RUEHHM
DE RUEHJA #0980 1370803
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 160803Z MAY 08
FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9023
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 1974
RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 8424
RUEHPF/AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH 0514
RUEHML/AMEMBASSY MANILA 3210
RUEHHI/AMEMBASSY HANOI 0601
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 1844
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 2503
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 2651
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC
RUEHRC/USDA FAS WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RUEHPH/CDC ATLANTA GA

UNCLAS JAKARTA 000980

SIPDIS
SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR EAP, OES, PRM, SES-O
STATE ALSO PASS TO USAID
DEPT FOR EB/IFD/OMA
AID/W FOR DCHA/FFP AND DCHA/OTI
AID/W FOR DCHA/OFDA KLUU, ACONVERY, RTHAYER
BANGKOK FOR DCHA/OFDA WBERGER AND RBARTON
BANGKOK FOR REO OFFICE, USAID/RDMA
PACOM FOR FPA
TREASURY FOR IA-SETH SEARLS
COMMERCE FOR 4430/ KELLY
SINGAPORE FOR BAKER
E.O. 12598: N/A
TAGS: [EAID](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [ID](#) [BM](#)
SUBJECT: UPDATE ON ASEAN RESPONSE TO BURMA DISASTER

11. (SBU) Summary. According to officials at the ASEAN Secretariat, most of the members of ASEAN's Emergency Rapid Assessment Team (ERAT) are now on the ground in Rangoon. On May 16, the ASEAN ERAT met with Burmese officials to request permission to enter affected areas. The Government of Burma (GOB) approved the request and will take the ERAT to several affected areas on May 17, according to our contacts at the Secretariat. The team will report their findings to the ASEAN Foreign Ministers at their emergency meeting in Singapore on May 19. ASEAN continues to favor coordinating closely with the GOB rather than applying strong pressure. End Summary.

ERAT arrives in Rangoon

12. (SBU) According to officials at the ASEAN Secretariat, five of the seven members of the ASEAN ERAT team are on the ground in Rangoon. The Secretariat expects the remaining members to arrive on May 16. ERAT is coordinating with GOB officials and other relief agencies, primarily the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team, to assess critical needs in areas affected by the cyclone. The team consists of experts from Brunei, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and the ASEAN Secretariat. On May 16, the ERAT met with GOB officials to request permission to enter the areas impacted by the cyclone. According to our contacts at the ASEAN Secretariat, the GOB approved their request and will take the ERAT to the affected regions on May 17. The GOB had not previously granted any foreign nationals access to affected areas, according to ASEAN officials. They note that UNDAC teams in Rangoon have been relying on local UN staff to conduct assessments. Once in affected regions, ERAT will gauge areas where ASEAN can make the most significant contribution to the relief

effort.

ERAT to report conditions to ASEAN Foreign Ministers

13. (SBU) ASEAN Secretary General Surin Pitsuwan will report on ERAT's findings at the Emergency Meeting of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers in Singapore on May 19. ASEAN continues to favor close coordination with the GOB rather than applying strong pressure on the military junta, according to Secretariat officials. However, recent press statements from Secretary General Surin reveal a growing frustration with Burmese resistance to accepting assistance. ASEAN Secretariat officials are closely coordinating with the disaster relief focal points in each of the member countries and provide updates to this network on a daily basis. Secretariat staff also post public updates on the situation in Burma on the ASEAN Committee for Disaster Management website (acdm-online.net).

HEFFERN